

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

Sub A1 > 1. A terminal control apparatus for controlling a terminal device that performs a specific process, said apparatus comprising:

communication means for performing communication between the terminal device and the terminal control apparatus; and

control means for controlling the terminal device, by using a terminal control function that accords with the terminal device which is communicating with the apparatus through the communication means.

2. The terminal control apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the control means selects one of terminal control functions, which is optimal for the terminal device, and performs the terminal control function selected, thereby to control the terminal device.

3. The terminal control apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the control means comprises selection means for selecting the terminal control function optimal for the terminal device, in accordance with terminal information that represents the type and capacity of the terminal device, and function-performing means for performing the terminal control function selected by the selection means.

4. The terminal control apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the function-performing means comprises function control means for controlling various function units of the terminal device, and the function control means controls the functions corresponding to various function units in accordance with the terminal

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capacity data contained in the terminal information.

5. The terminal control apparatus according to claim 1, wherein information is received from and transmitted to the terminal device through a terminal control system that operates regardless of the type of the terminal device.

6. A method of controlling a terminal device that performs a specific process, said method designed to perform a terminal control function that accords with the terminal device which is communicating with the apparatus through the communication means.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein one of terminal control functions, which is optimal for the terminal device, is selected, and the terminal control function selected is performed to control the terminal device.

8. The method according to claim 7, which comprises a step of selecting the terminal control function optimal for the terminal device, in accordance with the capacity of the terminal device; and a step of performing the terminal control function thus selected.

9. A terminal device having various function units that perform specific processes under the control of a terminal control apparatus, said terminal device comprising:

communication means for performing communication between the terminal device and the terminal control apparatus; and

control means for transmitting terminal information to the terminal control

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apparatus and for causing the function units to perform the specific processes in accordance with terminal control functions the terminal control apparatus has effected in accordance with the terminal information, said terminal information representing the type and capacity of the terminal device.

10. The terminal device according to claim 9, wherein the control means comprises information-storing means for storing the terminal information, information-transmitting means for acquiring the terminal information from the information-storing means and transmitting the same to the terminal control apparatus, and function-performing means for causing the function units to perform the specific processes in accordance with terminal control functions the terminal control apparatus has effected in accordance with the terminal information.

11. A method of controlling a terminal device having various function units that perform specific processes under the control of a terminal control apparatus, said method comprising a step of acquiring terminal information from the terminal device and transmitting the same to the terminal control apparatus, and a step of causing the function units to perform the specific processes in accordance with terminal control functions the terminal control apparatus has effected in accordance with the terminal information, said terminal information representing the type and capacity of the terminal device.

12. The method according to claim 11, which comprises a step of transmitting the terminal information from the terminal device to the terminal control

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apparatus, and a step of causing the function units to perform the specific processes in accordance with terminal control functions the terminal control apparatus has effected in accordance with the terminal information.

13. A medium storing a program for causing a terminal control apparatus to control the various function units provided in a terminal device and designed to perform specific processes.

14. The medium according to claim 13, which stores a plurality of programs for controlling the terminal function units and stores a program for causing the terminal control apparatus to select a program optimal for the terminal device, in accordance with the type of the terminal device.

15. The medium according to claim 14, wherein said program causes the terminal control apparatus to select a program optimal for the terminal device, in accordance with terminal information that represents the type and capacity of the terminal device.

16. The medium according to claim 13, which is incorporated in the terminal control apparatus.

17. The medium according to claim 14, wherein said plurality of programs are used in common in a plurality of terminal devices.

18. The medium according to claim 13, wherein the program imparts an input function, a communication function and a display function to the terminal device.

19. The medium according to claim 18, wherein the program is a mail-receiving program.

20. A program for causing a terminal control apparatus to control the various function units provided in a terminal device and designed to perform specific processes, said program being one selected by the terminal control apparatus in accordance with terminal information that represents the type and capacity of the terminal device, for imparting an input function, a communication function and a display function to the terminal device.